
Friday, January 27, 2023 ▫ Read Exodus 30:11–16

Questions from the Scripture text: How does this passage begin, for the first time since 25:1 (v11)? What is he to take of the people (v12)? What must every man give, when he is counted? What will happen if every numbered man does not give the ransom price? How much must every counted man give (v13)? What does this half-shekel become? Which males, specifically, are to be numbered (v14)? Who are not to give more (v15)? Who are not to give less? What does this ransom offering do for them? What are the priests to use the ransom money for (v16)? What would putting it into the tabernacle service do?

What is the most important way to muster the men of Israel? Exodus 31:11–16 looks forward to the p.m. sermon on the coming Lord’s Day. In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when the men were numbered for census, it was not so much that they could be mustered for war as to be memorialized before the Lord; Israel would be protected by atonement, not by military size.**

Dangerous business. Census-taking is risky. When Yahweh is angry with Israel in 2Sam 24, He provokes David to number the people. In the passage before us, we see the danger involved. It requires a ransom (v12). It may induce a plague (v12). It requires an offering (v13). It requires an offering (v14). It requires making atonement (v15). The money is atonement money (v16). To make atonement for yourselves (v16).

Indeed, all of this atonement and ransom language isn’t new. The redemption of the firstborn taught this in 13:11–16. All of the sacrifices and furniture and atonement/ordination in the priesthood have communicated this. But why such danger associated with a census?

The word translated number in v12–13 is derived from the lifting up of heads and has military connotations—a headcount of mustered troops. v14 corroborates this; it is only males over 20 whose heads are counted.

Israel needed safety from her enemies, but it would be the Lord Who is her protection. Even when He uses her fighting men, it is still He Who gives victory. And, as we see throughout the history of Israel, He does not even need to use them to give victory! But before she needs safety from her enemies, Israel needs safety from her God. His holiness among her is dangerous. And the tabernacle is the presence of that holiness.

All God’s people, equally invested and equally safe in Christ. The amount of the atonement could never be high enough. (indeed, we know that eventually the amount of the atonement must be Christ). The Lord sets it low enough that even the poor can afford it to communicate that the same atonement is necessary for every single man. For women and children, there would be a man through whom that fellowship was covenantally represented, but they would know that God was their God and had protected them through their man. And by taking this census at the beginning of the tabernacle project, the Lord communicates to the people that each of them is equally invested in the Lord and in His presence among the people. The rich are not more invested, and the poor are not less invested.

God’s presence among us a reminder of the payment of our atonement. v16 calls this investing of the census money in the tabernacle service “a memorial for the children of Israel before Yahweh.” Every single man of military age, rich or poor, would know that he has an equal share in that atonement, an equal share in that presence. And he would know that the Lord *wanted him to know*. There isn’t just safety here, there is fellowship.

God doesn’t just give His people safety in Christ. He gives us fellowship with Himself in the knowledge of that safety in Christ. He is our strength and protection from all enemies, and from His own wrath. Even more, He means for us to remember the cost of that atonement every time we know His presence to us in Christ.

When do you see or know God’s presence to you in Christ? What did that presence cost? Why? What habit have you made of remembering this?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for being our almighty shield and infinitely great reward. And thank You for atoning for us by Christ, so that we could have You as our prize and our protection. And thank You for bringing us into Your presence always through Christ, so that we might remember the glorious cost of our atonement. Grant that Your Spirit would continually bring these home to our hearts, we ask in Christ’s Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP141A “I Call You, Lord” or TPH522 “Behold, the Throne of Grace!”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Exodus 30 verse 11 through 16. These are God’s words. Then you always spoke to Moses saying when you take the census of the children of Israel for their number. Then every man shall give a ransom for himself to y’all play. When you number them, that there may be no plague among them, when you number them.

This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give Half a circle according to the circle of the sanctuary. A psycho is 20 garage. The half shackles will be an offering to you. Everyone included among those who are numbered from 20 years old, and above shall give and offering to your thing.

The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, then half a shekel. When you give an offering to Yahweh to make atonement for yourselves, And you shall take the atonement money of the children of israel and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting.

That it may be a memorial for the children of israel before. Yahweh To make atonement. For yourselves. So far the reading of gods inspired and inherent work. There were two primary reasons. For taking synthesis in the ancient world. You would take a census in order to know how much tax revenue.

Um, you could be raised by levying a tax. Upon the households of your realm and you would take a census to know. What sort of military you could raise? Uh, from among the people. Of your realm. Uh, it was an idea of how great the wealth or how great the power.

Of the nation was. However, israel. Uh has no king. Well at least no. Merely human king at this point. Uh, they belong to the lord and even when israel did have a king, He was to know that the people belonged to the lord. Being the people of god. They were not to think that their hope.

Um, Lay in either their military might or their monetary wealth. In fact, when the lord was angry with israel, Uh, in Second Samuel 24, we read that he provoked david to take a census And that was one of those occasions on which, you got an idea of how spiritually out of his mind, david had gotten because Joe had become the one You know, when joe is rebuking you and has better theology and advisor spiritual council than you do, Uh, then you know, That.

And that's something odd is happening. And we are instructed by that passage about the danger of taking a census impact. Although the text doesn't say anything about whether the shackle or the half shackles required or not. They're even some people who read into that passage. That the reason the census was so dangerous was because they forgot to levy the hashkel tax, Um, Or we, I don't know that, but it's not called attacks here.

Is it? It's called a ransom and an atonement. It is a reminder. That the people are israel's or the that israel. The people are the lords. Uh, by redemption. He has purchased them. They belong to him. He has redeemed them from egypt. He has saved them and now he has dwelling among them and they are Uh, in a place of higher privilege but also a place of greater danger.

Uh, it is a dangerous thing. Uh, for sinners to come into the presence of the lord. And this has been the main point of Of the last, several chapters of the book of Exodus is that they are going to have the lord among them. The lord is going to tent.

Uh camp. He's going to tab her knackol. Among them. And so we have these These things all. Combined, then in the preaching of the text. So this idea of Uh, ransom and verse 12. In order to escape a plague in verse 12. That in offering is required verse 13.

It's called an offering. Again, in verse 14, it's called an amendment in verse 15. It's a tonment money in verse 16 to make a 10 minute for themselves verse 16. You get this? Um, This danger associated. Uh would being in the presence of a holy god or having a holy god.

Among you and Uh, present to you. Definitely. There are military connotations here. Uh, what's translated their number? Uh, and then when you number, then The words used three times actually in verse 12. Is a word that has at its root the lifting up of heads. Uh we would also you could just as well and maybe even better, translate it, mustering them and you can hear in that when you when you muster the people of israel and you can hear the military connotation there.

But they would. The, the word is as the picture of the people lining up and everybody lifting your head up. So that the man who's doing the counting can count The heads of those who are 20 years old and older. The fact that it is 20 years old and older.

Also reminds us that it's a mustard lifting of the heads. Now, the fact that god deals covenantally with churches and with nations, Is also seen here in the fact that it's only the male's 20 years old and upward. That this is a household, it's not that the rest of israel didn't need atonement or that.

The rest of israel was not provided a ransom Uh, but that in An earthly terms in his dealing in time and history with people with churches with nations, god deals covenantally, Um, And that's how he's identifying the people of israel. Your husband or your father. Uh, if you are A wife or a child.

Uh, was the one. In whom your attendment was counted and your atonement money was offered unto god. Uh, And so we see. We see the lord reminding them that they do not belong to themselves. And they do not depend upon themselves and they are not to be devoted to themselves, but they belong to him, they're to find their identity in him, they're to find their strength in him and their purpose, and their hope.

And him. Notice that this is equal to all. Last israel think that their value corporately was in military might or monetary wealth. Uh, the lord requires this ransom at the time of the census and lest any individual israelite. Think that he may be of greater. Uh, usefulness or greater significance?

The rich do not pay more. They're not allowed to pay more. Uh in the ransom of the atonement money. They can pay more than some other way, but not for this. And lest anyone who is poor think that he is less. He is not allowed to pay less. And so the, the atonement money, the ransom money is set at a price low enough.

Um, that Uh, when it was required of jesus and peter, it could be found in the mouth of a fish. In one coin, half a shekel for jesus half a shekel for peter. And so the poor are not allowed to pay less. So that they will know that they are equally counted by god equally protected by god equally used by god.

Or maybe equally useful. To god. Perhaps, that's a better waves. Of saying that. But that with the lord being the one, Who is the greatness, the strength, the dignity, the hope, the value of his people. That each one. Is equal. In that way. Because the lord is the one.

Who is the strength and the value? Of the person. And then, And then what the lord used. The money for. Uh, became to them. A symbol something that they could look at. You shall take the atonement money of the children of israel appointed for the service. Of the tabernacle of meeting.

So, every israelite could Uh, whenever they saw the top tabernacle, no, That the half shekel that was given for that. Whether for them personally, as a man over 20 or for them in their behalf. Uh, by virtue of their husband or their father, they have to be a wife, a child Um, That there have shackle, had a part.

In the building of that tabernacle in the maintenance. Of that tabernacle in god's presence among them. And that he has not just taxed us. But that he has redeemed us for himself. But he's given us even the half shekel that we had in order to contribute. In order that we might have him for us.

Um, If you gave all of the wealth of the world, To have participation in the presence of god among you. You would have a great bargain. Uh, but here, the lord gave To them to be able to give a half a shekel. To have the participation. In the presence of god among them.

And the tabernacle you'd be able to walk by that tabernacle. Or hear about the tabernacle or remember, the tabernacle. And know that the lord had did that for you. Because this was, The plan of god, this is the plan of god still. Jesus going to make a going to prepare a place for us.

Jesus boring. It is spirit. That by his spirit, he and his father would make their home with us even now That god. Is giving his people. His presence. At a price that he himself provides. Such as The goodness and the grace of our god to us. And we look forward to hearing this passage preached.

Other words day afternoon, what's bright? Our father in heaven. We thank you. We thank you and praise you for the wisdom. With which you patiently instructed and taught your people and how much you built into the life of Israel, as a state and as a church. Um, Under you and in covenant with you.

We ask our god that you would make our family and our congregation. And our senate and our nation. To know itself. As covenantally before you as having dealings with the living god in time and in history. That there is no house. There is no church and there is no nation.

That has strength except that it comes from you. Or purpose except that it would serve you. And so we pray. Oh god. That those realities to which the tabernacle pointed, That the reality to which the ransom and the atonement one pointed. Uh, you would bring home to us. By the knowledge of the gospel, by the knowledge of christ.

Uh, lord, i pray that you would do this not only for us covenantally incorporately as a family, but for each of my children, That they would know you to be the god who has ransomed, then not with shekels. But by the blood of the lord, jesus, That they might have you as their strength that they might have you as their wealth that they might have you as their protection and their pleasure.

They're inheritance their hope. And that they might dwell in your presence and know your no, you to be theirs and themselves themselves to be yours. Um, for forever. Grant this knowledge, this assurance Uh, to them even from what you have taught in your word and grant that your spirit would enable them to live, And light of knowing you this way.

Please lord, do this for us. All We ask in jesus name. Amen.